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A Newsletter of the United States Embassy, Nigeria



Food Security: How Do We Prepare for the Next Generation?



- Ambassador Campbell is New U.S. Envoy to Nigeria
- \$3.5 Million U.S. Fund Revives Army Rehab Center
- July Fourth: Bush Counts America's Blessings

■ PAO's Note



U.S. Consulate General
Public Affairs Officer,
Atim Eneida George

Nigeria Matters

Dear *Crossroads* Family: I recently returned from an extended visit to the United States. While there, I told everyone who would listen to me that Nigeria Matters! In Washington, DC, Hanover, New Hampshire and Albany, NY, I spoke with local officials, students, professionals and ordinary citizens. They all got the same message - Nigeria

Matters! Washington certainly knows it. They sent John Campbell, one of the finest career diplomats, to be U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He arrived in May and presented his credentials on June 25th.

Nigeria matters because of her size, an estimated 140 million souls. Nigeria matters because of her cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Nigeria has the largest concentrations of Muslims and Christians living within a single national boundary. Clearly, Africa's most populous nation has learned the challenging lesson 'to whom much is given, much is expected' as Nigeria shoulders a significant burden in regional peacekeeping and conflict resolution.

Nigeria matters because of her vast mineral wealth. Did you know that Nigeria supplies 10% of America's energy needs? I fully expect that percentage to grow as Nigeria's natural gas comes on line. A Nigerian financial

analyst told me "Nigeria is a gas economy with oil."

Nigeria matters because it has been identified as part of the 'second wave' of the global HIV/AIDS pandemic along with India, China, Ethiopia and Russia. According to one study, in 2000, Nigeria had 2.6 million AIDS orphans.

While stateside, I told my fellow citizens that Nigeria is the most compelling place I have ever served and I have more than 20 years experience in international relations. Indeed, I firmly believe that 'all things are possible' in Nigeria. In this month's issue of *Crossroads*, you will see why I feel so strongly about Nigeria. In these pages, you will read about the \$2.1 million grant to promote food security by leveraging the benefits of biotechnology. Or perhaps you are interested in the question of military pensions. Take a look at our story on page 9 featuring the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Center in Oshodi. With a \$3.5 million USG grant, veterans are developing skills in agriculture and small business, among others, to improve the quality of their lives, families and communities. On page 13, you will read about the commissioning of the Aboregi Clinic. This investment in community public health will affect Aboregi and 18 surrounding villages.

As you can see, Nigerians are seizing the opportunity to make a difference. Together, we are working to address issues of access to potable water, food security, employment generation and skills training. For these and many more reasons, I say again - *Nigeria Matters!*❖

Quotable Quote

"Al- Qaeda's armed jihad in all circumstances violates fundamental tenets of every religion, including Islam and all international norms of standard behaviours. "

- Muhammad Nasiru Adeoye,
Lagos.

Editor's letter

To *Crossroads* Readers

DEAR CROSSROADS READERS,

For the past couple of years, *Crossroads* has been made available to you through postage delivery. Today's real-time world requires that we explore the great benefits of electronic delivery using e-mails and the Internet. We are currently creating an electronic distribution database that will catalogue the e-mail addresses of all *Crossroads* recipients. We intend to create a virtual *Crossroads* community. Membership in this community will provide on-line access to expanded versions of *Crossroads*, no delays in delivery of current issues, access to archived issues and host of new features in the future.

If you already receive *Crossroads* or would like to be a part of this exciting new community, please send in your e-mail address to:

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Food For All

In the 10,000 year history of farming and long before the concept of biotechnology became universal, African farmers have used different methods to improve their food chain. Farmers have paired healthy female animals with equally healthy male ones with the intent of producing healthier offsprings. Chickens that lay fat eggs have always been preserved while other less productive chickens are sold off in the local market. Each of these practices has some element of engineering in it. This is the concept upon which biotechnology is built.

Unfortunately, local methods such as this can no longer sustain Africa's food needs. Results of a survey conducted by the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) between 2001 to 2003, show that in Nigeria, more than 11% of women suffer from chronic malnutrition; 42% of children under 5 years are stunted in growth; while 25% are underweight. These symptoms are present in children under 2 years of age.

At the regional level, the cost of food insecurity in Africa is enormous while the persistence of chronic hunger, malnutrition and threat of famine is simply unacceptable. Three-quarters of the world's poor and hungry are located in rural areas. These people depend directly and indirectly on agriculture and agriculture-related activities for their food and income.

However, a recent U.S. - Nigeria partnership on agriculture is helping to address some of Africa's food crises. One such effort is the launching of a \$2.1 million Nigeria Agricultural Biotechnology Project (NABP). The goal of the project is to assist leading Nigerian universities and institutes in the research and development of bio-engineered cowpea and cassava varieties which resist insect and disease pests.



Securing crops from planting to harvesting and getting the products to the market remains a challenge to the local farmer.

Over the next five years, USAID plans to provide approximately \$50 million in funding to promote sustainable agriculture and economic growth activities in Nigeria.

Examples from other African

countries have shown that with new technology, agricultural yields can increase by as much as 60 to 100 percent. For example, field trials of bio-engineered cotton resistant to insect pests began last year in Burkina Faso. At present, cotton farmers in Burkina Faso using improved seeds need to spray just once as against 8 to 10 times per season, to get a 50 percent increase of their crops. In South Africa, bio-engineered cotton has doubled yield and significantly increased farm income.

Agricultural biotechnology holds the potential to increase food production, reduce the use of synthetic chemical pesticides, and make foods more nutritious. The yields of both cowpea and cassava crops could be more than doubled by developing varieties that are resistant to insect, pests and plant disease. These crop plagues undermine food security, and threaten the livelihoods of millions of small scale male and female farmers.

However, biotechnology like other new technologies, raises questions about risks and benefits. This is normal. There is nothing with zero risk. We drive our cars knowing fully well that there is some likelihood of an accident. Just like humans, pests and diseases perpetually threaten our crops. If we can vaccinate our children from polio, diphtheria, yellow fever and Influenza, why can't we vaccinate our crops?

Making food available is a major concern and through its agencies, the U.S government is committed to working with the Federal Government of Nigeria, research institutes and other stakeholders towards improving the policy and practice of agriculture.❖

Nigeria Set to Reduce Food Threat with US \$2.1 Million Biotech Fund



U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Rick Roberts (center), USAID Nigeria Mission Director Dawn Liberi (left), and the Federal Minister for Science and Technology Turner Isoun endorse the Nigeria Agriculture and Biotechnology Project on May 3, in Abuja.

© IITA

In order to reduce the threat to food security, the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Rick Roberts says, it is absolutely imperative that African countries increase their agricultural productivity as reflected in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Roberts spoke at the launch of a \$2.1 million project for the Nigeria Agricultural Biotechnology program sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Federal Government of Nigeria, and the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA). The project is expected to lay a strong

foundation for Nigeria to take advantage of biotechnology applications to improve agriculture.

Statistics from the Food and Agricultural Organization do not hold out much hope for Africa in the next 20 years unless there is a drastic change in crop production. Africa will need to increase her food production by 300 percent if her population is to be fed by 2050. The consumption of cereals (a staple food in most African countries) will leap from nine to 27 million metric tons in the next 20 years while between 25 to 30 million malnourished children presently live in Africa. About 13 million people in several African countries face severe hunger and starvation while half of

Subsaharan Africa is undernourished. The Nigeria Agriculture and Biotechnology Project (NABP) is expected to provide leverage with new technologies using bioengineering to address some of Africa's food crises.

NABP will be implemented over a three year period and its aim is to improve biotechnology capacity for Nigerian scientists and institutions, provide enhanced public awareness on biotechnology, and improve the implementation of bio-safety policies within the country.

The project has already established collaborative linkages with selected Nigerian universities and institutions including the National Biotechnology Development Agency

(NABDA) for biotechnology information dissemination, Sheda Science & Technology Complex (SHESTCO) for training of scientists, National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike for plant transformation, the Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR) for tissue culture technology, and the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta for advanced biotechnology training.

The research component will develop bioengineered cowpea with resistance to insect pests, and field test cassava that is resistant to the cassava mosaic disease in order to reduce the threat to food security of millions of small-scale farmers in Nigeria and West Africa.

Experts who spoke at a workshop during the project launch included Walter Hill, Dean, College of Agriculture, Tuskegee University, USA, Dawn Liberi, USAID/Nigeria Mission Director and Peter Hartman, Director General of IITA, Ibadan.

USAID has been working in Nigeria since the 1960s and provides about \$75 million annually in



The research component of NABP will develop cassava that is resistant to the cassava mosaic. A farmer marks out a nursery bed for cassava cultivation. (Inset), top; mini-stems dipped in fungicide suspension ensures the cassava is free from pests. Bottom; several shoots sprout from each stump.

development assistance to Nigeria in the areas of democracy and governance, agricultural development and economic growth, basic education, reproductive health and child survival, and HIV/AIDS. Through its 2004-2009 Country Strategic Plan, USAID has targeted

improvements in Nigeria's agricultural sector through increased agricultural productivity, enhanced value-added processing, increased commercialization, and a supportive policy on environment. ❖

<http://www.ics-nigeria.org/>

Survey on Food Security Launched

By Susan Jatau

Nigeria now has a document that provides data on the extent of food security and nutrient intakes of women and children. This followed the launching of the Nigeria Food Consumption and Nutrition Survey and the National Plan of Action on Food and Nutrition.

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) conducted the survey between 2001 and 2003 with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Results showed that:

- more than 11% of Nigerian women suffer from chronic malnutrition

- 19% are overweight, a condition with serious implications on the health of women and their babies

- 42% of children under 5 years are stunted in growth

- 25% are underweight

- All three symptoms of malnutrition- stunting, wasting and underweight are present in children under 2 years.

On the state of health of children and nursing mothers, the survey revealed that malaria is the most prevalent illness, affecting about 71% of children at least once a year and 32% of children between two and four times a year.

The survey showed that 29% of children under 5 are vitamin A deficient, while more than 22% are vita-

min E deficient. In addition, about 36% suffer from iron deficiency while one out of every five children is zinc deficient.

The survey is therefore "an extremely powerful tool to improve the quality of life of Nigerians" as well as plan future interventions stated USAID Director Dawn Liberi.

Other speakers also emphasized the importance of such a document for policy makers and implementers as the data provided would be analyzed and used to formulate a plan of action to improve the nutritional status of Nigerian women and children.

In addition IITA, which carried out the survey stressed the need to revitalize the national food production program. ❖



More than 8 million hectares of cowpea are grown in West and Central Africa. Nigeria is the largest producer with 4 million hectares, followed by Niger, 3 million hectares. Other producers are Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal.

Biotech Provides a Rich "Tool Box" for Food Security in Africa

*By Dr. Peter Hartman
Director General, International
Institute of Tropical Agriculture*

When the first realist sculpture was shown in Europe, it looked so real people were convinced that the sculptor had used a human body and covered it with something. Today, some of us pay to go and see sculptures without any worries. The

subject of biotechnology is a fascinating one but like most novel ideas, it too raises eyebrows.

In agriculture and livestock, humans have been selecting the parents that will participate in genetic exchange. Farmers, who noticed a cow that gave the most milk, rarely slaughtered it. It was normally used for genetic improvement, or if sold, was sold at a premium price. Virtually every food available today is a

product of this type of genetic exchange. The maize we eat has no resemblance what so ever to its original form. It comes from a plant that doesn't look anything like a modern corn plant; the original plant looks more like a type of grass, with long, thin blades. The old plant might have produced 10 to 20 seeds per plant, the present one produces 1000 seeds per plant. Imagine how many more hectares we would need just to

FACT SHEET

What is biotechnology?

Agricultural biotechnology is a collection of scientific techniques including genetic engineering, that are used to create, improve or modify plants, animals and microorganisms. Using conventional techniques, such as selective breeding, scientists have been working to

improve plants and animals for human benefit for hundreds of years.

How can biotechnology help African farmers and consumers?

Biotechnology can help farmers increase crop yields and feed even more people. For example, an Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

scientist used biotechnology to pinpoint a gene that could help wheat, a major food staple, grow on millions of acres worldwide that are now hostile to the crop. ARS scientists have also developed an experimental potato hybrid that contains genes to resist a new, more virulent

get the same yield.

In the 10,000-year history of farming, we have used many technologies to improve our food chain. As with other such technologies, when they were new they raised questions about risks and benefits. This is normal, as there is nothing with zero risk. What we are talking about are calculated risks. You drove your car in Lagos knowing that an accident was possible. Many medicines we take have side effects, but we take them because the benefits outweigh the risks.

IITA does not hold the view that biotechnology is a panacea, but it is an important tool that we need in the fight against poverty. It does not take much to realize that we have to use all possible tools when over 24,000 people die every day from starvation. Fifty percent of all the deaths of minors in sub-Saharan Africa can be attributed to either poor nutrition or a lack of food. Ideology is good but it should not get in Africa's way. We must be engaged in the science and make our own decisions about what is good or bad for us.

Scientists from the industrialized world use every tool at their disposal, including biotechnology, to look for answers to their questions. At IITA, we explore our surroundings with our partners for answers that can improve the livelihoods of our farmers, businesses and consumers.

We have developed some of the cleverest strategies imaginable to



The cowpea grain contains about 25% protein, and 64% carbohydrate. Its potential in the alleviation of malnutrition among resource poor farmers is inestimable.

Top: Genetically pure seeds

Middle: Harvesting cowpea seeds

Bottom: A pest-free cowpea farm.

control the most serious plant pests and diseases. Biological control has turned the monstrous problem of the Cassava "Mealy" bug into a relatively minor pest all across the continent. These knowledge intensive systems are the outcome of scientists remaining engaged and active in the field. Their effect in managing the cassava pests is wonderful for the poor producers and consumers who benefit from lower food costs.

Just like for humans, pests and diseases perpetually threaten our crops. If we can vaccinate our children from polio, diphtheria, yellow fever and influenza, why can't we vaccinate our crops? That is what we would like to aim for. In the opening of the USAID-SHELL cassava project in Warri, I said that cassava is a designer crop. If we need starch we can make it produce more starch. If we need it for livestock feed we can make it produce more leaves. I said we could even make it dance. Now imagine if we have vaccinated cassava, cowpea, or yam, then like any healthy plant it would truly be dancing in the wind. Biotechnology might help us get there.

Biotechnology is not a panacea, it is important that we understand that, but it is a very rich toolbox with many components. They range from tissue culture techniques to produce disease free cassava and yams to genetic markers that make conventional breeding more efficient, to the science that could lead us to vaccinate our cowpeas. These new techniques could

strain of the so-called "late blight," the disease that caused the Irish potato famine in the 1840s.

Helping the environment by reducing pesticide use - Biotechnology can help farmers reduce their reliance on insecticides and herbicides. For example, grain species of

cotton produced using biotechnology are resistant to Senegal cotton pests.

Combating human diseases - The first biotechnology products were medicines designed to address human diseases. Insulin, used to treat diabetics and blood clot-busting enzymes for heart attack victims are now produced easily and cheaply as a result of

biotechnology. New research by ARS finds that transgenic animals may be a new source of valuable hormones and drugs to treat emphysema and infections in babies.

Promoting human health - Researchers are creating ways to boost the nutritional value of foods using biotechnology.

help us solve problems that up to now have proved intractable by other means. As with all new technologies, they are additions to an existing compliment of tools.

In Northern Nigeria, farmers are producing the most wonderful cowpea in the world. They are using this legume to improve the yield of their cereals, to control weeds, to improve the nutrition of their children and to generate income.

Through these systems, there is an economic revolution in that part of Nigeria. I got those words from a businessman. I said "What revolution?" He said "Look, I have been delivering products in that region for years. I see it every day". Playing the devil's advocate, I said, "and how did you measure this economic revolution?" He said "certainly not like IITA with all your data, tables and graphs. I am a businessman. I know an economic revolution when I see one." I said, "So what did you see?" He said, "We used to sell our products in small bottles. That is what they could afford. Over the last several years, we had to change all our delivery system because now they only buy the big bottles. 'That Mr. Director General', he said, 'is an economic revolution and cowpea is part of it.'"

This is a wonderful story. Unfortunately, that beautiful plant, the cowpea, is under threat from a particular pest. We have tried



Women display healthy cassava tubers at a local market in Umuahia.



Biotechnology is making it possible for farmers to have three types of mini-stem cuttings produced from a cassava stem and used for multiplication. (Left), hardwood—1 to 2 nodes; (middle) semi-mature—4 to 6 nodes; (right), tip-shoot cuttings—6 to 10 nodes.

traditional pest management strategies for many years now they show some promise but they are not enough. Biotechnology provides some hope. If we succeed, cowpea growers will not have to watch their beautiful cowpea crop being devoured by caterpillars every season. Of course, they could use insecticides,

and we encourage them, but few farmers can afford them or the safety equipment desired. So we are investigating options through biotechnology. We do not have a solution, but if we did not try, we would be doing a tremendous disservice to the farmers and farm families of Nigeria.❖

Combating animal diseases - Biotechnology helped produce a vaccine that protects animals in the wild against rabies and a vaccine for "shipping fever" of cattle, the biggest killer of beef cattle in feedlots.

How widespread are biotech crops?

With Plant Health Inspection Service approval, over 5,000 field trials have

been safely conducted since 1987. About 40 new agricultural products have completed all the federal regulatory requirements (from all relevant agencies) and may be sold commercially. They range from longer-lasting tomatoes to pest-resistant corn. Statistics for crops can be found at www.usda.gov/nass

Why has biotechnology become a trade issue?

Some people may not feel comfortable with new technology. They may worry about environmental, social and economic consequences - real or simply feared. Consumer concerns may also be bolstered by a historic distrust in their governments' ability to ensure the safety of the food supply.

\$3.5m US Grant for Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre

By March Oyinki

U.S. Consulate General, Lagos

Retiring soldiers of the Nigerian Army will no longer face grueling hardship and long wait at the pension office after retirement. A \$3.5 million U.S. grant is making it possible for retirees of the armed forces to receive adequate training in management, computer skills, fish farming, soap making, welding, carpentry and a variety of other small scale trades that will empower them to earn a decent living as responsible members of society.

This change is the result of a collaborative program between the U.S. Department of Labor and the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Center (NAFRC), Oshodi. During his August 2001 visit to Nigeria, former President Bill Clinton announced a U.S. government program to revitalize the Resettlement Center through the U.S. Agency for International Development. Over the last four years, the U.S. government has provided funding averaging US\$1 million annually for the upgrade of training equipment, provision of hostels and the introduction of new technology and livestock farming.

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General in Lagos organized a media tour to showcase new developments at the complex. NAFRC Camp Commandant Air Vice Marshal Emmanuel Aquasua told reporters that "The center had been neglected seriously in the past several years, and until this life-line came, the institution was in a state of serious disrepair. Infrastructure had decayed seriously and the finances to keep the institution worthy of its name were not there."

With funding from the United



A demonstration poultry farm for training retiring soldiers. (Inset), NAFRC Commandant Emmanuel Aquasua briefing reporters on the innovations at the Armed Forces Resettlement Center.

States government, and technical support from Aurora Associates International (a U.S. based consultancy firm over-seeing the NAFRC project in Nigeria), the center can now possess state of the art HIV/AIDS screening equipment. The center also has a well-equipped computer training school that is fully air-conditioned.

During the tour of the complex, the president of Aurora Associates International Jim Statman, showed reporters one of four power generating plants provided by the U.S. government to help boost power

supply to the center. "We are also constructing a new hostel building to provide accommodation for the trainees of the center," said Statman.

"One very remarkable thing is that every cent spent in this center is accounted for, and in all the years we have been here, not a single missing item has been recorded. This is so because adequate protective measures are put in place to secure the equipment before they are released for use," he added.

When one of the reporters during a question and answer session asked if there is any possibility for a Nigerian firm to take over the management of the project from Aurora Associates International, Major Abdulahi Musa, Public Relations Officer of the Center said a decision will be taken by the appropriate authorities at the right time. ❖



U.S. Elections 2004 Update

Important Dates

Presidential election campaigns have always been the backbone of the U.S. presidential race. Party caucuses and primary elections are essential to choosing presidential candidates. These scheduled primaries and caucuses lead to the national election. In this context, a “caucus” generally refers to a statewide gathering of each party’s local political activists during the presidential nomination process. The purpose of the caucus system is to indicate, through delegate choice, which presidential candidate is preferred by each state party’s members. Primaries serve a similar function, but they are direct electoral contests held to choose a political party’s candidate for a particular public office. The calendar below lists currently scheduled presidential primaries and caucuses for the 2004 presidential elections.

Political Conventions

July 26-29
Democratic National Convention,
Boston, Massachusetts

August 30 - September 2
Republican National Convention,
New York City

Election Day

November 2, 2004

Electoral College

November 2, 2004
On Election Day, the voters in each state choose “electors” to serve in the Electoral College. As

Continued on page 11

Congressional, State Election Contests Begin to Heat Up

*By Alexandra Abboud
Washington File Staff Writer*

With so much media coverage focusing on the presidential election this year, it is easy to forget that in November there are elections for 34 Senate seats and all 435 seats of the House of Representatives, as well as hundreds of state and local leaders.

The Senate races — along with the presidential race — appear to be heating up throughout the country. The battleground states in the 2004 Senate races will most likely be in the South. “There are five Democratic seats that are up for grabs in southern states that prefer Republicans, including North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Louisiana,” says Gary Nordlinger, a Washington political consultant. “The odds favor the Senate staying in Republican control.”

President Bush won all of these southern states in the 2000 presidential election and in three of them — South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina — won by 10 percentage points or more. For this reason, many

commentators argue that the Republican Party will maintain its majority in the Senate and may even gain seats. Republicans currently hold 51 seats against the Democrats’ 48. One Senator is an independent.

As for the Democrats, there are Republican-controlled Senate seats in Illinois and Alaska that Democrats believe they have a reasonable chance of picking up, Nordlinger said. “But what you will see coming out of these races is a closely divided Senate regardless of who’s in control,” he added.

As in the presidential race, Senate contests often involve a primary process in which parties select their candidate from several contenders. In Pennsylvania, for example, there was an unusually strong primary challenge to Republican incumbent Arlen Specter by conservative Congressman Patrick Toomey, who claimed that Specter’s liberal stances on such issues as reproductive rights, affirmative action and labor were not representative of the party’s philosophy.

Although the two disagree on a number of issues, President Bush



First debate between Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate from Florida. From left, Betty Castor, Rep. Peter Deutch, and Alex Penelas.

©AP/WWP/Alan Diaz

U.S. Elections 2004 Update

campaigned in support of Specter. It was generally believed that Specter was more likely to win against the Democratic challenger in November. On April 27, Specter won a narrow victory over Toomey to become the Republican candidate.

Every two years, all 435 members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election, unlike senators, who serve six-year terms. The Republicans have had control of the House for the last 10 years and currently have 228 seats to the Democrats' 205. Most analysts agree that the 2004 election will not result in a drastic change in the composition of the House.

"Barring a catastrophe the House is certain to remain Republican," Nordlinger said. "They may even pick up seats."

According to Congressional Quarterly, the Democratic Party would need to maintain each of its vulnerable seats and win almost all of the competitive seats held by Republicans in order to gain a majority.

Having control of the Senate or the House brings significant political advantage. The majority party controls the legislative agenda in large measure through the power of its committee chairs. Winning the Senate or House is a major priority for both parties, second only in importance to

winning the White House.

In addition to the national races in 2004, 11 states will hold races for governor, with eight incumbents running for re-election and three states holding open elections as a result of retirements. A number of state legislators are up for re-election as well. Finally, there are elections scheduled in most of the approximately 88,000 local government units across the United States such as cities, towns, municipalities, counties, townships, villages, school districts and special districts.

Local government is the most direct form of government in the United States and party affiliation at that level often melts away in favor of a candidate's ability to perform the practical duties of local government. From mayors of cities to town and village council members, these local elected officials directly serve the needs of their constituencies by providing services such as police and fire protection, education, housing and public transportation.

In an election year voters in local elections get to evaluate the performance of these officials. If local needs are not being met — a voter can easily look at the conditions of the roads in their towns or the quality of the schools and decide — the official may not be re-elected.❖

■ <http://usinfo.state.gov/> ■



Florida U.S. Senate candidates, from left, Dan Webster, Bill McCollum, and Mel Martinez at a Republican Club debate in Orlando, Fla.

Important Dates

soon as election results are final, the states prepare seven "Certificates of Ascertainment" of the electors chosen, and send one original copy along with two certified copies to the Archivist of the United States.

December 13, 2004

The electors in each state meet to select the new president and vice president. The electors record their votes on six "Certificates of Vote," which are paired with the six remaining original "Certificates of Ascertainment." The electors sign, seal and certify the packages of electoral votes and immediately send them to the president of the Senate, the Archivist of the United States and other designated federal and state officials.

December 14, 2004 (or no later than this date)

The president of the Senate, the Archivist of the United States, and other designated federal and state officials must have the electoral votes in hand.

January 6, 2005

Congress meets in joint session to count the electoral votes (unless Congress passes a law to change the date).

Inauguration Day

January 20, 2005



Ambassador Campbell is New U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria



Ambassador John Campbell

John Campbell is the new U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria. He was sworn in as Ambassador to Nigeria on May 18 and arrived at post on May 20. Ambassador Campbell presented his credentials on June 25. His most recent previous assignment was as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Human Resources.

A career Foreign Service Officer since 1975, his overseas postings included Lyon, Paris, and Geneva, and he served as Polcouns at Lagos, Nigeria (1988-1990) and Pretoria/Cape Town, South Africa (1993-96). Assignments at the Department have included Dean, School of language

Studies at the Foreign Service Institute, Deputy Executive Secretary, Director of UN Political Affairs in IO, and P staff.

Ambassador Campbell was born in Washington, D.C. in 1944. He earned the BA and MA degrees from the University of Virginia and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1970. He was a 1990-91 State Department Senior Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. From 1970 to 1975 he taught British and French history at Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, Virginia.

Ambassador Campbell succeeds Ambassador Howard F. Jeter who departed Nigeria in August 2003.❖

President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Launched as Ambassador Tobias Visits Nigeria

U.S. Global Aids Coordinator Ambassador Randall Tobias visited Nigeria on June 3-4, and discussed President Bush's Emergency Plan for HIV/AIDS in support of Nigeria's national effort under Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

In addition to meeting with the Nigerian President and key stakeholders in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, Ambassador Tobias visited the Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital as well as St. Mary's Hospital, a private Catholic hospital. Both institutions are receiving U.S. assistance in their HIV/AIDS programs and support services.

Nigeria is one of twelve Sub-Saharan African focus countries that will receive substantial new resources under President Bush's bold and groundbreaking initiative to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic.



Ambassador Randall Tobias (second left) being received by the Arch Bishop John Onaikan and a Catholic Nun at the faith-based St. Mary Catholic Hospital, Abuja. At left is the U.S. Ambassador John Campbell.

U.S. officials have described President Obasanjo as one of the most supportive world leaders advancing HIV/AIDS programming in the global arena. Nigeria's leadership on HIV/AIDS has stimulated broad support for an effective response against the epidemic not only in Nigeria, but on

the African continent.

Following his visit to Nigeria, Ambassador Tobias is proceeding to South Africa where he will meet with U.S. embassy representatives from the twelve African focus countries to discuss the Emergency Plan's implementation.❖

U.S. Mission Builds Clinic For Rural Villages



U.S. Consul General Robyn Hinson-Jones (center) is assisted by the Health Commissioner for Lagos State Leke Pitan (left), and Oba Abdul Ganiyu Adebawale to commission the Aboreji Clinic on April 30.

On April 30, the U.S. Mission to Nigeria handed over a \$100,000 health clinic it built for the 5,000 residents of Aboreji and 18 nearby villages in eastern Lagos State. U.S. Consul General Robyn Hinson-Jones transferred the clinic to representatives of Lagos State, who will work closely with a nongovernmental organization and private companies to provide

doctors, medicine and equipment for the center.

The clinic is expected to perform a full range of health procedures, including services for mothers and infants, counseling for HIV/AIDS, training in cleanliness and treatment of guinea worm and malaria.

Hinson-Jones praised the project for its cooperation among the Nigerian Government, the U.S.

Government, nongovernmental organizations and the people of the Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area. "This clinic represents more than just better health care services for 5,000 rural Nigerians," she said. "This center represents America's deep commitment to the well being of all Nigerians."

Aboreji is about 25 kilometers east of Epe in an area with minimal health care services. Since 2001, the U.S. Mission has worked with Mission to Save the Helpless (MITOSATH), Chevron Texaco Nigeria, Shell Nigeria Petroleum Development Corporation and retired General T.Y. Danjuma to provide better services to the area's residents.

The U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC), a part of the U.S. Department of Defense that provides humanitarian assistance overseas, oversaw the project. The Aboreji clinic marks the fifth successfully completed ODC program in Nigeria since 1999. Others include a school under construction in the Federal Capital Territory and a donation of educational materials in Abia State. ❖



Inhabitants of Aboreji with smiling faces welcome their new clinic.



A water borehole was one of the utilities built to service the Aboreji Clinic and 18 nearby villages.

EAC College and Career Fair Scheduled For October 7

The Educational Advising Center (EAC) under the U.S. Consulate General Lagos will host its College and Career Fair on the 7 and 8 October this year. The Fair is an educational supermarket that provides host country and third country nationals in Nigeria with information and counseling on how to study in the U.S. Participants at the Fair have the unique opportunity to explore first-hand information on U.S. university admission requirements and processes, including requirements for F-1 visas.

The 2003 Fair witnessed an overwhelming demand for information about study in the U.S., and this year, representatives and recruiters from U.S. institutions will be available to interact with fair attendees while EAC advisors and staff from different Nigerian Educational Boards will provide a rich profile of Nigerian education.

The EAC College and Career Fair is an annual event and has over the last six years, directly contributed to the increase in the number of high-quality Nigerian applicants to U.S. institutions.❖



A U.S. recruiter explains admission procedures to students who attended the 2003 EAC College Fair in Lagos.

Education Takes a Leap in Doma, Nasarawa State

By Sani Mohammed
With field reports
from Susan Jatau
& Musa Ibn
Mohammed

"We are LEAP students," proclaimed three primary school kids, as they ended their presentations in flawless English and with self-confidence never witnessed in the recent past in Doma Local Government of Nasarawa State. With

those words, the assembly hall was electrified, and the ovation was loud and long lasting. Looking around the hall, one could see the broad smile on the faces of both parents and teachers, illustrating a feeling of complete satisfaction. Seated proudly in front of the gathering at the Literacy and Numeracy Agenda (LNA) fora, were the Speaker and key members of the Nasarawa State House of Assembly, members of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and other community leaders in Nasarawa State.

Overwhelmed with what the students have been able to accomplish through the USAID-assisted Literacy Enhancement Assistance Program (LEAP), Nasarawa State House Speaker Mohammed Ogoshi Onawo donated two motorcycles to aid education supervision in Doma and Ekye Local Governments.

"LEAP seeks to promote improved teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy skills in primary grades three to six and is operational in three states of Nigeria – Lagos, Kano and Nasarawa," says Melinda Taylor, USAID's Basic Education Advisor.



LEAP students demonstrate literacy and numerical skills in Doma LGA.

Similar successes are being recorded in Kano and Lagos, where the LEAP is currently being implemented.

"The LEAP Local Government Authority fora brings together all education stakeholders to set priorities for the LGA primary schools," says LEAP Policy Advisor for

Abuja, Alastair Rodd. The fora have transformed the PTAs into active participants in the running and management of schools.

In all the participating LEAP schools in Nigeria, parents are now confident of the quality of education and continue to show support and appreciation to the program.

According to Alhaji Tasiu Abubakar Sherifai, PTA chairman for Festival Road Primary School in Kano, the introduction of LEAP in the school has reinvigorated the PTA. He said because the PTA's participation is an important part of the LEAP program, parents of Festival Road Primary School students have introduced rules guiding the conduct of children. The rules also make it mandatory for parents to allow their girls to attend school before engaging in street selling or getting involved in early marriages.

Regarding the impact of LEAP on primary schools, Alhaji Hassan Abdullahi, PTA Treasurer of Fadimatu Islamiyya School in Kano, said, "Time and history will not erase its impact from our memory."❖

Top Nigerian Student Wins \$37,000 Scholarship Money

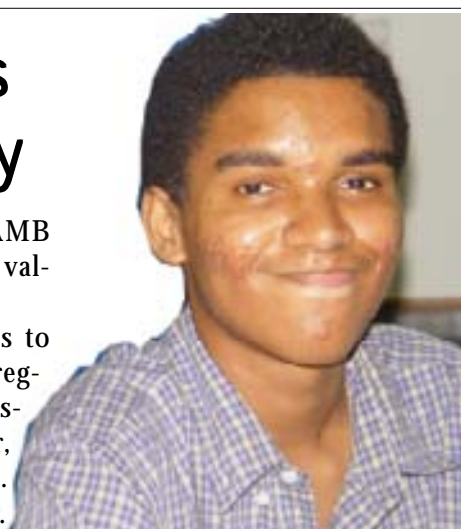
Success is sweet and Gregory Ugwi, 18, and a member of the U.S. Consulate Educational Advising Center is tasting it. He recently won eight different scholarships from various universities in the U.S. including a \$37,000 scholarship to study Engineering at Princeton University in New Jersey.

"Part of the things that I learned as a student of Loyola Jesuit College Abuja, was to prepare and aim for the best and the Jesuits make learning and life very interesting," Gregory said.

A native of Estako, Edo State, Gregory graduated from the Loyola Jesuit College with six alphas in the West African Examination Council examination and scored the highest points nationwide during the 2003/2004 Joint Admission and Matriculation Examination. This performance made him

a recipient of the Cowbell-JAMB 2003/2004 Scholarship Award valued at N100,000.

While waiting for universities to commence admissions, Gregory registered with the Educational Advising Center as a student member, and sat for the SAT 1 examination. He scored 1590 out of 1600 points. He did the SAT 11 and obtained 2350 points out of the 2400 available marks. Following these, eight U.S. universities have extended admissions with scholarship to him. Oberlin College, Ohio offered him admission with a \$28,000 scholarship covering the cost of tuition. Kenyon College, \$39,510, MIT, \$37,700. He is also waitlisted at Harvard. Princeton University tops it all with an all-inclu-



A confident Gregory Ugwi looks forward to studying in the U.S.

sive (tuition, fees, living expenses, laptop, stipend and return ticket) scholarship.

Under the U.S. State Department, the Educational Advising Center in Lagos and Abuja provide access to information and programs for study in the U.S. ❖

Workshop Exposes NGOs to New Grants Funding Skills

*By Samuel Eytayo
U.S. Consulate General, Lagos*

More than 25 Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) concerned with issues of adolescence, HIV/AIDS prevention, civic education, women's empowerment, democracy and good governance participated in a grantsmithing workshop sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General, Lagos in collaboration with the Nigeria Society for Information, Arts and Culture (NSIAC), Ibadan.

Declaring the workshop open, Public Affairs Officer, Atim Eneida George acknowledged that the U.S. Mission receives daily requests for grants and funding support for programs. The mission is unable to fulfill many of these requests because of budgetary limitations. "The motivation for organizing this first grantsmithing workshop for emerging NGOs in the country is aimed at providing answers to some of

these requests," Ms. George said. She added that the U.S. mission can assure standing tools such as providing adequate information, resource persons, opportunity for traveling including exchange programs, to enable NGOs gain skills that will help them execute projects that empower their communities.

Barrister Rotimi Akeredolu, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria in his presentation challenged the participants to run their NGOs according to established and prevailing laws. "NGOs in Nigeria should get registered under parts A or C of the Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) 1990" he said. Established laws are made to protect NGO's activities and to give credence to their status at the international level, Akeredolu said. To take the stress out of the registration process, he advised that NGOs should consider engaging the services of an

attorney.

Speaking on patronage, Bunmi Oni, a Chartered Accountant said, for NGOs to attain the status of continuous patronage from donor agencies, transparency and accountability must be their watchword. Oni said adopting basic financial management skills will ensure transparency and accountability, which in essence, will attract funding from donors.

Lekan Olagunju, Executive Secretary, NSIAC and Director of the American Corner, Ibadan said donor agencies look for specific details when assessing a grant proposal. He advised that NGOs must learn to have good grant writing skills and also strive to incorporate as much details as possible.

The workshop was concluded with a practical electronic discussion session facilitated by Samuel Eytayo, U.S. Embassy Webmaster. ❖

U.S. Commissions \$600,000 Solar Rural Electrification Project in Jigawa State

Three rural communities with more than 20,000 people in Jigawa State now enjoy a unique source of electrical power generated by solar energy. The electric project which is first of its kind in that part of the country was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Jigawa Alternative Energy Trust Fund (JAETF) and the United States Department of Energy (DOE).

Between 1999 and 2003, USAID provided funds to DOE for technical assistance and training to key energy sectors in Nigeria and also to develop a national rural electrification strategy, including a pilot program demonstrating the use of solar energy technologies. The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF) provides electricity utilizing photovoltaic technology which converts sunlight directly into electricity. The project has provided power to light up households, schools and streets. In addition, the system has been utilized to irrigate farm lands, electrify a village clinic, provide pipe borne water from boreholes and help establish micro enterprises. The three villages are



A petty trader makes use of the rural solar electricity project to power a groundnut oil expeller.

Wawa Rafi with a population of about 5,000 people in Kazuare Local Government Area; Baturiya with a population of about 10,000 in Kirikasama Local Government Area; and Ahoto with a population of about 5,000 in Buji Local Government Area.

The project provides a micro enterprise business outpost with six shops situated in the village center that also doubles as the central market. The shops have been allocated to cooperative groups. The shops are

equipped with solar electricity to power lights as well as a groundnut oil expeller.

The clinic that serves as a first aid, consultation and dispensary center for the villages has also benefited from lighting and refrigeration for vaccines.

The project installed street lights in strategic locations in the villages, Mosques and several houses have been given electricity.

A mobile irrigation system converts solar energy into power that drives water pumps to supply farmlands around the lake in Wawa Rife. This irrigation system allows farmers to cultivate year round and increase crop yields.

Solar powered water pumps also supply the village reservoir from the borehole that was sunk through this collaborative project.

Primary schools and the education system in the three villages have also reaped the benefits of the Solar Electric Light Fund program. Some classrooms and administrative offices are now operable after dark, having been outfitted with lights. Evening classes allow support for pupils as well as their parents who have begun to develop an adult education program. In the future, the community will benefit from the installation of a computer system to manage the school.❖

Independence Anniversary is Day for Gratitude, Celebration - *Bush*

In this Independence Anniversary speech delivered at Courthouse Square Ripley, West Virginia, President George W. Bush recounts America's Founding Father's struggle for self determination, the country's gift of freedom to the world and the new challenge posed by terrorists. Below are excerpts.

The anniversary of America's independence is a day of gratitude, and a day for celebration. On the 4th of July, we count our blessings, and there are so many to count. We're thankful for the families we love. We're thankful for the opportunities in America. We're thankful for our freedom, the freedom declared by our founding fathers, defended by many generations and granted to each one of us by Almighty God.

Americans know that our country did not come about by chance. Our nation was first designed as a colony, serving an empire and answering to a king. The founders had other things in mind. In the summer of 1776, they declared that these colonies are and, of right, ought to be free and independent states.

With a great army massed against the Americans, these were not idle words. "Stepping forward to sign the Declaration," said Dr. Benjamin Rush, "was like signing your own death warrant." Yet he and 55 others put their name on the document, pledging to the cause their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

And all Americans can draw a straight line from the free lives we lead today to that one moment, when the world changed forever. From that day in 1776, freedom has had a home, and freedom has had a defender.

Unlike any other country, America came into the world with a message for mankind — that all are created equal, and all are meant to be free. There is no American race; there's only an American creed: We believe in the dignity and rights of every person. We believe in equal justice, limited government, and in the rule

of law. We believe in personal responsibility, and tolerance toward others.

This creed of freedom and equality has lifted the lives of millions of Americans, of citizens by birth and citizens by choice. This creed draws our friends to us. It sets our enemies against us, and always inspires the best that is within us. In this 228th year of our independence, we have seen that American patriotism is still a living faith. We love our country; only more when she's threatened

An Air Force pilot spoke for everyone when he was asked if anyone on his base had a personal connection to the victims of September the 11th. He said, I think we all do; they were all Americans.

In Afghanistan we defeated the Taliban regime, but that was just the first step. The liberation of that country was the beginning of the long and unrelenting struggle we have entered. America is a patient and determined country. We're working with our allies; we'll use every tool of diplomacy and law enforcement; we're organizing to protect the homeland against further attack. And we will take the battle to the enemy, wherever he hides and wherever he plans and wherever he dwells.

The greatest asset we have in this conflict is the military of the United States of America. At this hour, more than 60,000 American troops are deployed around the world in the war against terror. Many Americans today have family members serving in the military. Wherever they are stationed, this nation is depending on them. And we are proud of them.

America has always depended on the courage and character of our

people in the military. Veterans know better than anyone that love for country is shown in works. A spirit of service is alive and strong in America today. Our response to tragedy and sudden national challenges has revealed the courage, and it has revealed the kindness of the American people. As we fight a war abroad, here at home Americans are answering the call of service, giving their time and energy to causes greater than self-interest. This nation is confronting a terrible evil, and we are overcoming evil with good

There is much in modern America that the founding generation might not understand. Yet, they would recognize the Stars and Stripes, and they would know qualities of character that still define our country. They would take great pride, as I do, in the decent, responsible, caring citizens who are the true strength of our country. I am certain, as well, that if they could survey this country of ours, they would join us all in giving thanks for all that we have.

A year after independence was declared, the Second Continental Congress set the design of our nation's flag. The stars on blue were to represent a new constellation, the different world our young nation had begun to create. Today, as much as ever before, America bears the hope of the world. Yet, from the day of our founding, America's own great hope has never been in ourselves alone. The founders humbly sought the wisdom and the blessing of Divine Providence.

May we always live by that same trust, and may God continue to watch over the United States of America. God bless America. ❖



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July Events	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2	3 Independence Anniversary Celebrations (Lagos)
	4 Independence Anniversary Celebrations (Abuja)	5	6 Media Briefing every Tuesday (Lagos)	7 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	8	9	10
	11 World Population Day	12	13	14 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	15	16	17
	18	19 FBI Finan- cial Crime W/shop (Lagos)	20	21 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28 U.S. study classes (Lagos & Abuja)	29	30	31
2004							

Please note that ALL events on this calendar are STRICTLY by invitation. For enquiries please call the telephone numbers listed above.